Mr. Dexter King
The King Center
449 Auburn Ave.,
Atlanta, GE 30312

Harold Weisberg
7627 Old Receiver Rd.
Frederick, MD 21702
3/1/97

Dear Mr. King,

If health problems had not prevented it I'd have written you as soon as you and your mother came out for a trial for James Earl Ray. I write now, in violation of doctor's orders, in the belief I can inform you and to encourage you not to expect too much, perhaps not to expect the impossible, should Ray be granted a trial. Aside from what I learned in writing my book Frame-Up: the Martin Luther King/James Earl Ray Case and what thereafter I learned as Ray's investigator, I filed FOIA lawsuits against the government and got about 80,000 pages of what had been secret records. You and your center are welcome, by the way, to copies of any of this and nothing will be asked in return.

Most of my work has been on the JFK assassination. I wrote the first book and I think eight or nine published since then and do not have a single letter or phone call from any of those of whom I wrote so critically complaining of unfairness or inaccuracy by any one of them. There was so many similarities that after your father was assassinated I used FOIA to obtain information about that crime and I add its official investigation.

I conducted the investigation for the habeas corpus, in which we succeeddd and then for the two weeks of dispentiary hearing in which the phony liberal judge found in contradiction to all the evidence and denied the trial. He did use the words "guilt or innocence" were "immaterial" to what was before him, whether Ray had been coerced into his plea and whether he had had the "effective assistance of counsel." I have those transcripts and if you'd like you can copy them. I think you should want them. They are the only addressing of the alleged official evidence under oath in a federal court.

Resumed 3/2. Sorry I had to suspend. Please read my enclosed letter to the Wash. Post about its today's dishonesties.

As best I can now recall after all those years the SCLC was persuaded by the Department of Justice, possibly by Assistant Attorney General Vinson, that they had a solid case against Ray and that he would be electrocuted unless he copped a plea. In fact they had no case at all against Ray, which is still true, and they could prevent the disaster of taking a case to court only by getting Ray to agree to a plea. There was no chance at all in those days of his being electrocuted.

When my book was out I tried to interest the SCLC and got nowhere. Ditto for the Black Caucus in Congress, other than John Conyers, who was fine. I sent copies of the book to Atlanta and others also did. No reaction. The chief lawyer wrote or spoke to your mother for me. We were referred to Mr. Wachtel in New York. I went up and got no farther than the reception desk. Later he had a law student phone me. He never spoke to me or saw me at all or looked at any evidence.

I know nothing about this alleged new test but as of several decades ago it was not necessary.

I have no doubt there was the person Ray refers to as "Raoul" and he refused absolutely to give me any leads on it. I therefore do not believe that he will come up with any now, not any real ones. Or, base no hopes on that or on anything like it.

I doubt he had any real identification anyway.

There seems to be some black assumption of Ray's guilt. I am convinced he was not part of any conspiracy to kill your father of which he knew. Curtis in the McMillan book made it all up and much is ridiculous. Byers did get leniency for a major crime. I've forgotten the details but he lied. As so many did hoping for consideration in return.

I ask nothing of you. You are welcome to all of this if you want any of it. It is, I fear, as close to the truth as will be possible because the crime itself was never investigated. It will all be a public archive at local Hood College and if you want any information about me I suggest you ask the history professor there who will be in charge of that archive, Dr. Gerald Knight. His office phone is 301/696-3720. His home phone is 301/473-5639.

I did not continue with this work and returned to my work on the JFK assassination because I could not develop any interest on the part of any black person. Other than John Conyers.

If you are a lawyer or would care to have one look at it I suggest you ask Justice for the file of what it gave London to get Ray extradited. It is public although when I saw it was marked secret. No case at all. They even pretended that the assassination was not a political crime. It was disclosed to me in CA 718-70. I do not have the copies I used in the book but they are required to give that file to you if you ask for it under FOIA because it is disclosed, is now public information.

Sorry I cannot now be of more help.

Sincerely,

Harold Weisberg

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